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Ministry of Education

'GREEN' ABBOTSFORD TRADITIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL OPENS

ABBOTSFORD – The new Abbotsford traditional middle school will promote environmental awareness and energy conservation, Abbotsford-Mt. Lehman MLA Michael de Jong said today at the school's official opening.

"I'm pleased to see such progressive environmental features incorporated into the school's design," said de Jong. "I have seen this project grow from its planning stages into what it is today, and it's a huge testament to the partnerships between government, school boards and contractors who work hard to get the job done on time and on budget."

The new middle school was created by constructing a $9.8-million addition to the former Career Technical Centre. The middle school shares the building with the Abbotsford traditional secondary school.

The new school makes use of natural light and surroundings, including courtyards created to save existing vegetation and to form outdoor spaces for students and staff to gather and enjoy green space. Recycled materials were used in the floor coverings and furnishings, and low flow/low volume mechanical fixtures will reduce water consumption. The addition also includes energy conserving, high efficiency heating units. As well, several mature trees on the property were preserved, and to commemorate the official opening of the middle school staff and guests planted a maple tree in the courtyard adjacent to the cafeteria.

"This new school provides a modern environment for students to learn, grow and achieve their best," said Education Minister Shirley Bond. "The green design will also help us reach our goal of reducing B.C.'s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33 per cent below current levels by 2020."

The middle school includes students in grades 6-8 while the secondary school includes students in grades 9-12. Each school has a separate entrance and functions as stand-alone school, but shares a library, music room and industrial education shops. Combined, the Abbotsford traditional middle and secondary schools have room for more than 1,000 students – about 450 students in middle school and 600 in secondary school.

"The official opening of our new middle school completes the Abbotsford school board's long-term goal of providing traditional schools of choice from kindergarten to Grade 12 for parents, students and teachers," said school board chair Joanne Field. "This comprehensive school facility, combined with the financial support and commitment of the provincial government, fulfils the vision and careful planning of our senior administration by bringing this long-awaited project to a reality today."

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Since 2001, $75.1 million in school construction projects have been completed in the Abbotsford school district, including $10.7 million for Clayburn middle school, $11.7 million for Eugene Reimer middle school and $5.3 million for William A. Fraser middle school.

During the same time, the Province has spent over $1 billion to complete 26 new schools, 32 replacements, 140 additions and 22 renovation projects across British Columbia. By the end of 2008-09, the Province will have invested more than $2.8 billion in school capital and maintenance projects across British Columbia.

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